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STATEMENT OF THE GOVERNORS OF CALIFORNIA, OREGON AND WASHINGTON ON REGIONAL ACTION TO ADDRESS GLOBAL WARMING

Global warming will have serious adverse consequences on the economy, health and environment of the west coast states. While these consequences are not entirely predictable, the effects of global warming are already evident in the form of higher temperatures, reduced snow pack, insect infestation and increased fire danger in our forests, and rising sea levels on our ocean shores. These impacts will grow significantly in coming years if we do nothing to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Unfortunately, present federal policies will not lead to a reduction in current emission levels of the greenhouse gasses associated with global warming. Therefore, the Governors of the west coast states have concluded that our states must act individually and regionally to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Economic, Environmental Benefits

The benefits of addressing global warming are both economic and environmental. Reducing reliance on fossil fuels provides a hedge against the economic impact from oil and natural gas price spikes for individuals and companies. Also, it keeps our energy dollars invested at home instead of exporting them overseas to oil and gas suppliers.

Equally important, emerging green and clean technologies are poised to become a multi-billion dollar growth sector. Addressing global warming now will position west coast states to become global leaders in this emerging economic sector, creating investment opportunities and jobs in new renewable, efficiency and control technologies. It will create opportunities for export of innovative technologies and applications. And, it will promote local businesses that can deliver the goods and services needed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

We will address global warming with strategies that provide long-term sustainability for the environment, protect public health, consider social equity, and expand public awareness. Climate change prevention strategies that reduce combustion of fossil fuels and waste will also reduce emissions that cause smog, soot, haze and toxic air pollution. These strategies can help ensure adequate water supplies, preserve farm and forest land uses, and reduce traffic congestion.

Reducing greenhouse gas emissions will also provide significant dollar savings when health care costs and other environmental damages are factored in. We commit to pursue attainable climate change prevention strategies that provide these multiple benefits.

The individual west coast states have already taken significant steps to curb greenhouse gas emissions through carbon standards for new power plants, promotion of renewable energy, and improved building codes and energy efficiency. In many areas, however, our states can work together to achieve greenhouse gas reductions that are greater than what they can achieve on their own.

Moving Forward

For these reasons, the Governors have directed their staffs to work together during the next year to develop joint policy recommendations focused on activities that require regional cooperation and action and present them to the Governors no later than September 1, 2004. These measures should include recommendations on, among other things, ways the west coast states can:

- Use the states' combined purchasing power to obtain fuel-efficient vehicles and low-rolling resistance tires for motor pool fleets. For example, the states are working on a uniform specification for the purchase of hybrid vehicles.
- Reduce emissions from diesel fuel in transportation through reductions in the use of diesel generators in ships at west coast ports, and in the use of diesel engines in trucks by creating a system of emission-free truck stops along the Interstate 5 corridor that stretches from Mexico to Canada.
- Remove barriers to and encourage the development of renewable electricity generation resources and technologies.
- Improve efficiency standards with the potential to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Specifically, the states could work together to upgrade appliance efficiency standards and seek waivers of federal limitations where necessary.
- Develop consistent and coordinated greenhouse gas emission inventories, protocols for standard reporting, and accounting methods for greenhouse gas emissions; and collaborate on improved scientific tools to more precisely measure the impact of climate change.

Staff shall develop their recommendations in consultation and cooperation with all interested stakeholders and the public. Staff in each state shall work with the business, environmental, and academic communities to develop recommendations as well as proposed goals by which we will measure our progress and effectiveness in reducing greenhouse gas emissions. In doing so, they should also seek to increase public understanding of global warming issues.

We invite other western U.S. states, Canadian provinces, and Mexican states to join us in this approach to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and respond to climate change impacts in our region. By inviting broadened participation, we hope to foster additional opportunities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and bring additional talents and skills to developing our global warming mitigation and adaptation strategies.